

Virginia Board of Education
Student Advisory Committee
Minutes: December 11, 2007

Students in Attendance:

Anna Akers-Pecht, The Governor's School of Southside Virginia; Patrick Curtis, William Fleming High School; Christy Darling, Atlee High School; Shannon Farrow, Ni River Middle School; Daniel Jung, River Bend Middle School; Nitin Nainani, Chickahominy Middle School; Corinna Pan, Thomas Jefferson High school of Science and Technology; Sean Poppen, Greenbrier Middle School; Drew Proffit, John S. Battle High School; Brielle Spencer, Heritage Middle School; Sandy Suhling, North Stafford High School; Hannah Wagner, Western Branch High School.

Department of Education Staff in Attendance:

Anne Wescott, Michelle Vucci, Michelle Parker, Melissa Velazquez

Virginia Board of Education Members in Attendance:

Eleanor Saslaw, Isis Castro

Mrs. Saslaw and Mrs. Castro welcomed the 12 new members of the Student Advisory Committee (SAC) and paired the students up to introduce each other to the group. The SAC is composed of eight high school students representing each superintendent's region, and four middle school students, selected at large.

Department of Education staff reviewed the SAC notebook, a copy of which was given to each student, and other administrative matters with the committee members. Mrs. Castro explained the mission of the committee. Mrs. Saslaw explained the role of the committee, expectations for the work of the committee and a review of the eight objectives in the Board of Education's Comprehensive Plan for 2005-2010.

The SAC committee members were divided into three groups of four students. Each group was directed to identify two topics or issues that they felt the Board of Education may want to address. Members were informed that after the group identified two issues those issues would be presented to the entire SAC for consideration. The SAC would then pick one issue from each group as the policy areas the SAC would research and present to the Board of Education for action.

Following lunch, Dr. Billy K. Cannaday, Jr., Superintendent of Public Instruction, met with the students and shared his appreciation for their service and the importance of their recommendations to the Board of Education.

The groups chose the following issues:

Group 1 chose improving communications between teachers/administration and parents and students and expanding the role of technology; Group 2 chose methods for closing the achievement gap and administration/student relations; Group 3 chose promoting community service in schools and enhancing the promotion and communication of opportunities to students.

Representatives of each group presented the groups' two issues with explanations to the full committee. After lengthy discussion that revealed a great deal of interest in communication issues by each group, the entire committee decided that each group would work on both of its issues. Therefore, all six identified issues will be studied. Each group then met and identified the work that needed to be done and made assignments for the February meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for February 20-21, 2008.